

# 7 levels of consciousness: The path of enlightenment

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**BEYOND THE ORDINARY EXPERIENCE:** Spiritual development is no different than, say, sports. Higher levels of consciousness can be achieved with the help of regular practice and training of the mind-body system.

**In brief, the seven levels of consciousness which make up the path of spiritual development, are:**

1. the state of waking consciousness;
2. deep sleep;
3. dreaming;
4. transcendental consciousness;
5. cosmic consciousness;
6. god consciousness;
- unity consciousness.

The first three states — waking consciousness, deep sleep and the dreaming state of sleep — are known to every adult human being with a functional nervous system.

The last four levels — transcendental, cosmic, god and unity consciousness — are usually not available right away. These states become accessible only as one engages in regular practice of meditation.

What are these higher levels like? Here are some essential points from Jerry Freeman, student of Maharishi Mahesh Yogi for over 40 years.

## **4<sup>TH</sup> LEVEL:**

## **TRANSCENDENTAL CONSCIOUSNESS**

**COMPLETE SILENCE:** “The fourth state of consciousness — the Pure Transcendental Consciousness — is just [silence](#). That’s the state where the mind and the senses are completely silent, but consciousness is fully awake.”

**BLISS:** “This level of consciousness has the quality of bliss, and that’s, if you want to say so, a goal in the practice of meditation — to develop that contact, to dip in to that samadhi. To cultivate the ability of the nervous system to sustain that.”



**IT’S ALL JUST A DREAM:** “Our conditioned existence in this fleeting world is like a tiny drop of dew, or a bubble floating in a stream; like a flash of lightning in a summer cloud, or a flickering lamp, an illusion, a phantom, or a dream,” Buddha taught in his *Diamond Sutra*.

## **5<sup>TH</sup> LEVEL: COSMIC CONSCIOUSNESS**

*“Gradually, with the ability of the nervous system to stay in contact with the fourth state of consciousness, one develops the ability to sustain that inner silence, that unbounded inner reality simultaneously while one is doing things, thinking thoughts, [being] active. Eventually, that becomes stabilized and it becomes a permanent state of consciousness which Maharishi called the Cosmic Consciousness.”*

**GOING BEYOND THE SMALL ME:** “You can also call this fifth state a ‘Witness Consciousness’ — you can say that the pure consciousness now is understood to be my real self. My sublime self is actually that pure, eternal consciousness.

A transformation takes place where everything that had previously considered to be ‘me’ is seen through and discovered to be just some phenomenal thing going on. It’s not me! My little ego that motors around and feels so important — you discover that oh, that is not what I am!”

**IMPERMANENCE:** “From that inner silence of the Atman, the whole outer world is seen as being transient, transitory, illusory. (...) That’s kind of the first permanent awakening.

It’s rare, really uncommon. And yet it is still just one unfoldment, just that first permanent awakening.”

## **6<sup>TH</sup> LEVEL: GOD CONSCIOUSNESS**

*“From the fifth state, a very similar progression takes place as one transcends thought and eventually reaches the Self, the Atman.”*



**DEEPENING OF BLISS:** “Initially, our perception is on the surface of things. But because now there is this connection with the deepest within, this creates the capacity to see more deeply. As the perception of the outer world becomes deeper and more subtle, attention goes to more and more pleasing levels — subtler is more pleasing, more unbounded, closer to that pure level where everything is bliss.”

**FINDING JOY IN EVERYTHING:** “The heart opens up. That’s a very powerful force. The heart can overtake anything.

You begin to approach that same silence that you found within yourself at the subtlest level of what you see outside. Any contact, any experience in the material world — even the scolding of a black crow — becomes delightful.”

**DEVOTION:** “As that develops, the characteristic of devotion opens up with it.

That devotion can manifest itself in infinitely many different ways, as a reflection of each person’s unique individuality. It may come out as a deep devotion in a religious sense. It may be in a more generalized sort of way — a heart goes out and is overtaken with the perfection and the beauty of everything that is encountered.

That is called God Consciousness.”



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## **7<sup>th</sup> LEVEL: UNITY CONSCIOUSNESS**

*“Now, the seventh major state of consciousness — this, I would say, is the full awakening, with the asterisk that it never ends. It will always keep on unfolding — in the way of expansion and deepening.”*

**EVERY TWO IS ACTUALLY ONE:** “Where once was the inner and the outer, the real and the unreal, the Self and the non-Self, the absolute and the relative, the eternal and the temporal — there is now only One.

In Unity Consciousness, myself is the Self of all. There is only one Self. (...) Atman is Brahman. One discovers that this Atman which was once inner, is actually all encompassing. Everything which is in myself is myself. There is no other.”

**WATCH FULL VIDEO LECTURE:** Jerry Freeman explains the four higher levels of consciousness. Recorded in October 2013 by Rick Archer for his [Buddha at the Gas Pump](#) series.

Jerry Freeman – Buddha at the Gas Pump Interview

## About Jerry Freeman

**Jerry Freeman** has been practicing the advanced techniques of [Transcendental Meditation](#) for more than 40 years.



**DESCRIBING THE PATH:** [Maharishi Mahesh Yogi](#), the founder of the Transcendental Meditation program, expounded on seven states of consciousness to set pointers for practitioners. Read excerpts from Maharishi’s book, [“Science of Being, Art of Living”](#)

He was trained by Maharishi Mahesh Yogi as a teacher of Transcendental Meditation and lived for some years in the semi-monastic Purusha program Maharishi founded. Though forced to leave the

Purusha program due to severe health problems, Jerry Freeman has continued to study Maharishi's teachings to this day.

Jerry Freeman is presently working on a book tentatively titled: *The Enlightenment Puzzle: What Everyone Should Know About Awakening*.

In the book's introduction, he states, "What I have to say here is not my own invention. ... What I will say here is not an official presentation of Maharishi's teaching, as it includes numerous observations and conclusions that are my own.

However, the great insights about awakening, human consciousness, enlightenment, etc. are not mine. They are Maharishi's."

Jerry is living in Connecticut, US, supporting a family of adopted children by making musical instruments. His most famous 'product line' is that of penny whistles – highly valued by some of the most renowned performers of Irish music.